

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 2316

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP PEPR PINR ES
SUBJ: BIO DATA ON NEW FOREIGN MINISTER AND NEW DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL
WITHIN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY; OTHER PERSONNEL CHANGES

REF: SAN SALVADOR 2118

1. DR. JOSE ANTONIO RODRIGUEZ PORTH WAS SWORN IN AS THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER ON APRIL 28, 1978. BORN ON APRIL 7, 1916 IN SAN SALVADOR, RODRIHUEZ PORTH RECEIVED A LAW DEGREE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR (UES) IN NOVEMBER 1941. AMONG THE POSITIONS HE HELD AFTER HIS GRADUATION WERE THOSE OF SUB-SECRETARIES OF THE MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AND JUSTICE (1944 AND 1948). HE SERVED AS A DEPUTY IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FROM 1947-1948. IN THE EARLY 1950'S, HE TAUGHT PHILOSOPHY AT THE UES AND WAS ASSOCIATED WITH TWO NOW DEFUNCT NEWSPAPERS. RODRIGUEZ PORTH WAS DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF LAW AT THE UES FROM 1955-1959. CONCURRENTLY, HE WAS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE FROM 1956-1957.

2. WHEN FORMER PRESIDENT LEMUS WAS OVERTHROWN BY THE MILITARY, RODRIGUEZ JOINED THE CIVIL MILITARY DIRECTORATE IN WHICH HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOR OVER-
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SEEING THE WORK OF THE SUPREME COURT. IN APRIL 1961, HE WAS DROPPED FROM THE DIRECTORATE BECAUSE HIS COLLEAGUES FOUND HIM TOO POLITICALLY CONSERVATIVE. AS A POINT OF POSSIBLE INTEREST, HE HAS JUST BEEN DESCRIBED TO US AS ONE OF THE FEW CIVILIANS IN EL SALVADOR WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO EXERCISE SIGNIFICANT CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON HIS EARLIER CAREER, SEE BIO DATA SHEET SUBMITTED ON HIM IN JANUARY 1972.

3. IN 1972, RODRIGUEZ RAN AS THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OF THE SALVADORAN POPULAR PARTY (PPS). HE FINISHED LAST IN A FIELD OF FOUR. SINCE THAT TIME, HE HAS DEVOTED HIMSELF MAINLY TO HIS LEGAL PRACTICE, WHICH HAVE INCLUDED SOME OF EL SALVADOR'S WEALTHIEST INDIVIDUALS AND MOST POWERFUL FIRMS. HE HAS BEEN LEGAL ADVISOR TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE (ANEP) SINCE 1976. FROM 1950 TO 1972 HE WAS LEGAL ADVISOR TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF EL SALVADOR.

4. AMONG THE OFFICIAL POSITIONS HE HAS HELD SINCE 1972 HAVE BEEN THOSE OF A MEMBER OF THE TECHNICAL COMMISSION IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY / 8,;3 1973) AND A MEMBER OF THE SALVADORAN DELEGATION TO MEXICO PEACE TALKS WITH HONDURAS (SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 1973). HE HAS ALSO BEEN A CONSULTANT TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON LAW OF THE SEA MATTERS.

5. RODRIGUEZ IS MARRIED TO THE FORMER ANA MARIA RIVAS AND HAS TWO CHILDREN, A DAUGHTER (LOURDES MARIA - 20 YEARS OLD) AND SON (JOSE ANTONIO - 16 YEARS OLD). HE IS A SPORTS ENTHUSIAST AND IS ALSO A MEMBER OF SEVERAL CIVIC INSTITUTIONS (INCLUDING THE SALVADORAN RED CROSS). HE IS THE AUTHOR OF A TEXTBOOK ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL LAW OF EL SALVADOR AND HAS WRITTEN NUMEROUS NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ON POLITICAL AND SOCIAL THEMES. HE WAS REPORTEDLY CONFIDENTIAL

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THE INDIVIDUAL WHO PLACED AND PAID FOR ADS CONTAINING A LETTER TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN. THE ADS APPEARED IN THE NOVEMBER 15, 1977 EDITIONS OF "EL DIARIO DE HOY" AND "LA PRENSA GRAFICA" (SEE 77 SAN SALVADOR 5272 AND 5279). THE LETTER STATED THAT GOES AUTHORITIES FEARED TO TAKE NECESSARY MEASURES AGAINST TERRORISM BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT EL SALVADOR MIGHT BE SUBJECTED TO SANCTIONS IMPOSED BY THE U.S. AGAINST NATIONS VIOLATING HUMAN RIGHTS.

6. ON MAY 1, AMBASSADOR GUILLERMO RUBIO MELHADO REPLACED JUAN RICARDO SALAVERRIA AS DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL WITHIN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. RUBIO, A CAREER DIPLOMAT, IS NOT A WELL-KNOWN FIGURE TO THIS EMBASSY. HE HAS PREVIOUSLY SERVED AS CONSUL GENERAL IN BARCELONA (1957), FIRST SECRETARY IN PARIS (1958-1963), AND AS CONSUL AND THEN AS MINISTER COUNSELLOR IN MEXICO (1963-1971). RUBIO BECAME AMBASSADOR TO ECUADOR IN OCTOBER 1972 AND ALSO HAS SERVED AS AMBASSADOR TO COLOMBIA WHERE HE PROFESSES TO HAVE BEEN A GOOD AND ADMIRING FRIEND OF US AMB VAKY. IN MARCH OF THIS YEAR, HE RECEIVED A DECORATION FROM THE COLOMBIAN AMBASSADOR IN EL SALVADOR FOR HIS PREVIOUS WORK THERE.

7. IN ANOTHER PERSONNEL CHANGE AT THE FOREIGN
MINISTRY, DR RUY CESAR MIRANDA LUPONE RESIGNED AS
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS AS OF MAY 1,
1978. NO REPLACEMENT HAS BEEN AS YET NAMED. ERNESTO
FERREIRO RUSCONI, WHO SINCE JULY 1, 1977 HAD BEEN
SUBDIRECTOR OF THE SALVADORAN INSTITUTE OF TOURISM,
WAS APPOINTED SUBDIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL ON MAY 10.
FERREIRO HAD HELD THIS POSITION ONCE BEFORE DURING
THE MOLINA ADMINISTRATION.
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